AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1-7. (canceled)

8. (previously presented) A device as claimed in claim 20, comprising:

a memory for storing a sequence of fingerprint data signals, which is detected from a fingertip; and

means for comparing a fingerprint of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

9. (previously presented) A device as claimed in claim 20, wherein said detecting unit comprises a solid-state image sensor for scanning a fingerprint image into a sequence of data signals.

10. (previously presented) A device as claimed in claim 20, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a converting circuit to convert a variable pressure from the fingertip into a variable electric resistance; and

a measuring circuit to measure said variable electric resistance.

11. (previously presented) A device for detecting a fingerprint as claimed in claim 20, wherein said detecting unit comprises:

a converting circuit to convert a variable pressure from the fingertip into a variable capacitance;

a measuring circuit to measure said variable capacitance.

12. (previously presented) An electric apparatus which executes a predetermined operation and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said electric apparatus is powered when the fingerprint data signal sequence of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is stored in said memory.

13. (previously presented) An electric apparatus as claimed in claim 12, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

14. (previously presented) An electric apparatus which executes a predetermined operation and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said electric apparatus is powered when the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is coincident with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

15. (previously presented) An electric apparatus as claimed in claim 14, wherein the device is operable as a power switch.

16. (previously presented) A doorkeeper apparatus which controls a door lock mechanism and which includes the device claimed in claim 8, wherein said doorkeeper apparatus opens a door when the fingerprint data signal sequence of the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is stored in said memory.

17. (previously presented) A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 16, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

18. (previously presented) A doorkeeper apparatus which controls a door lock mechanism and which includes the device clamed in claim 8, wherein said doorkeeper apparatus opens a door when the fingertip placed currently on said contact surface is coincident with the fingerprint data signal sequence stored in said memory.

19. (previously presented) A doorkeeper apparatus as claimed in claim 18, wherein the device is operable as a doorbell switch.

20. (currently amended) A device for detecting a fingerprint of a fingertip placed on a contact surface that moves up and down and is part of a fingerprint input section, the device comprising:

a moving element opposing downward movement of the contact surface when the contact surface is pressed downward by a fingertip whose fingerprint is to be detected;

a restraint having a detent position at a depressed location of the contact surface and urging the contact surface to remain in the detent position when a first pressure is applied to the contact surface by a fingertip and permitting movement of the contact surface ~~below the detent position when pressure on the contact surface is greater than the first pressure and~~ above the detent position when pressure on the contact surface is less than the first pressure; and

a detecting unit detecting a fingerprint on the contact surface only when the contact surface is in the detent position.

21. (previously presented) The device of claim 20, further comprising a switch at the detent position that activates said detector when the contact surface is in the detent position.

22. (previously presented) The device of claim 21, wherein the contact surface comprises a projection that contacts said switch when the contact surface is in the detent position.

23. (previously presented) The device of claim 20, wherein said restraint comprises a spring member with a recess that defines the detent position.

24. (previously presented) The device of claim 23, wherein the contact surface comprises a projection that fits into said recess when the contact surface is in the detent position.

25. (previously presented) The device of claim 24, wherein said spring member comprises a leaf spring that is urged radially outward by said projection when said projection is not in said recess.